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THE PSYCHOLOGY OF REASONING. Based on Experimental Researches in Hypnotism. By *Alfred Binet*. Translated from the recent second French edition by Adam Gowans Whyte, B. Sc. Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Co. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd. 1899. Pages, 193. Price, 75 cents (3s. 6d.).

While the original of this book was written fully a decade ago, and now in its new second edition is substantially unaltered, it forms an exceedingly clear and attractive discussion of the psychology of reasoning, so far as light can be shed on that subject by the theory of images. There are few psychological works that can be read with so little expenditure of effort, and on this ground the book is especially adapted to the general public.

The main thesis of the author is that "reasoning is an organisation of images, determined by the properties of the images themselves, and that the images have merely to be brought together for them to become organised, and that reasoning then follows with the inevitable necessity of a reflex" (mechanical). He begins with perception which is defined to be "the process by which the mind completes, with the accompaniment of images, an impression of the senses." The theory of images is then discussed, in the light of researches in hypnotism, and the visual, auditory, motor, and other types of imagination thoroughly characterised. Reasoning in perception is then considered, as is afterwards the mechanism of reasoning. The author finds that there is "no decided difference between perception and logical reasoning; the two operations are both reasonings, transitions from the known to the unknown. . . . Perception contains all the essential elements of a peripatetic syllogism. . . . Perceptive reasoning and logical reasoning imply the same mechanism. . . . When the premisses of a reasoning are stated, the conclusion results from them with the necessity of a reflex action. In other words, we reason because we have in our brain a machine for reasoning."

In enforcing the preceding thesis the author makes use of the following beautiful comparison of the flowers formed by the frost on the window panes of a room: "Let us thaw them with our breath and then observe the regelation of the liquid layer. While crystallization is taking place round a first crystal, 'you notice one feature which is perfectly unalterable, and that is, angular magnitude. The spiculae branch from the trunk, and from these branches others shoot; but the angles enclosed by the spiculae are unalterable.' Just as these crystallisations are produced by the forces inherent in each of the molecules, so reasoning is produced by the properties inherent in each of the images; just as crystallisation, in its oddest eccentricities, always observes a certain angular value, so reasoning, true, false, or insane, always obeys the laws of resemblance and of contiguity."

Dr. Binet concludes the little book with the following words, which clearly characterise the position that he takes: "Images are not by any means dead and inert things; they have active properties; they attract each other, become connected and fused together. It is wrong to make the image into a photographic

"stereotype, fixed and immutable. It is a living element, something which is born, something which transforms itself, and which grows like one of our nails or our hairs. Mental activity results from the activity of images as the life of the hive results from the life of the bees, or, rather, as the life of an organism results from the life of its cells."

ROSMINI E SPENCER, STUDIO ESPOSITIVO-CRITICO DI FILOSOFIA MORALE. By *Giovanni Vidari*. Ulrico Hoepli, Milan, 1899. Pages, xvi+297.

This book contains parallel studies of Rosminian and Spencerian ethics. The genesis and the historical development of the respective systems are set forth and the principles of each are subjected to an historico-psychological and theoretical criticism. The author devotes some space to the idea and basis of law, which has of late received so much attention at the hands of Italian writers. The book offers a good opportunity for acquaintance with Rosmini who, though not well known in America, is called by the author "one of our greatest philosophers, certainly the greatest of modern times." In the concluding part of the work the results of the author's investigation are summed up and placed in comparison with some of the more recent ethical doctrines; and there is some attempt to show what, according to the author, should constitute the basis of a science of ethics. The book is the outgrowth of an essay for which the author received a prize in the Ravizza competition in the years 1894 and 1895.

LA PSICOLOGIA CONTEMPORANEA. By *Guido Villa*. Bocca Bros., Turin. 1899. Pages, 660. Price, L. 14.

The author proposes to present an outline of the actual conditions of the study of Sociology in those countries in which it is most highly cultivated, i. e., in Germany, England and the United States. The author frankly admits that Italy itself presents but little and scattered material for his proposed study, as well as for the history of psychology. He proposes, above all, to expound the general principles upon which these methods and results are founded and to point out the way by which these principles have been derived from early philosophic and psychologic ideas. "The present work," he says, "might be called an historico-critical introduction to the study of contemporaneous psychology." The work is written in an unusually entertaining style and is full of information interesting to the layman as well as to the technical student of this branch of science. The author seems to be thoroughly acquainted with the history of psychology, from Plato and Aristotle down through the various English and German schools. Considerable credit is bestowed upon American contributions to the science. It is somewhat amusing—however, to find our Professor James, of Harvard, referred to as "a member of the faculty of the Cambridge-Boston, University," (page 84). Greater familiarity with the personnel of American Universities would have led the author to credit Princeton University with Professor Baldwin instead of the University of Toronto.